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Pro-active crisis management with the help of economic-psychological approaches

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Pro-active crisis management

Definition

- What's a crisis:
 - suprising and complex events
 - demand swift and publically reactions
 - Unplanned
 - Of indefinite length
 - Subject to little influence

Pro-active crisis management

How Media Deal with Crisis Events

- What happens in crisis communication:
 - Media “explains” how a crisis is interpreted and thereby shapes the image of the affected company
 - Crisis events are transformed and scandalised according to criteria intrinsic to media: news factors, strategies of personalisation and moralisation and **questions of guilt and responsibility**
- Crisis reporting consists of
 - numerical information
 - Background of information
 - Various groups of speakers try to explain the situation
 - Figures and causes named responsible

Pro-active crisis management

Question of causes and guilt: Theories

- Attribution theories: question features, causes and intentions or behaviour directed toward selves or others
- Workable model of interpretation of latent and manifest risks to reputation resulting from the responsibility perceived by stakeholders and the media
- An approach practicable for PR to describe attributions of cause comes from **Bernhard Weiner (1992)**

Pro-active crisis management

Approach to investigation

- Attribution theory takes the factors of location (internal vs. external) and stability (stable vs. unstable) as a basis for the causal explanations of events.

Stability	Location	
	internal	external
stable	<i>Competence</i>	<i>Difficulty of tasks</i>
variable	<i>Effort</i>	<i>Happenstance</i>

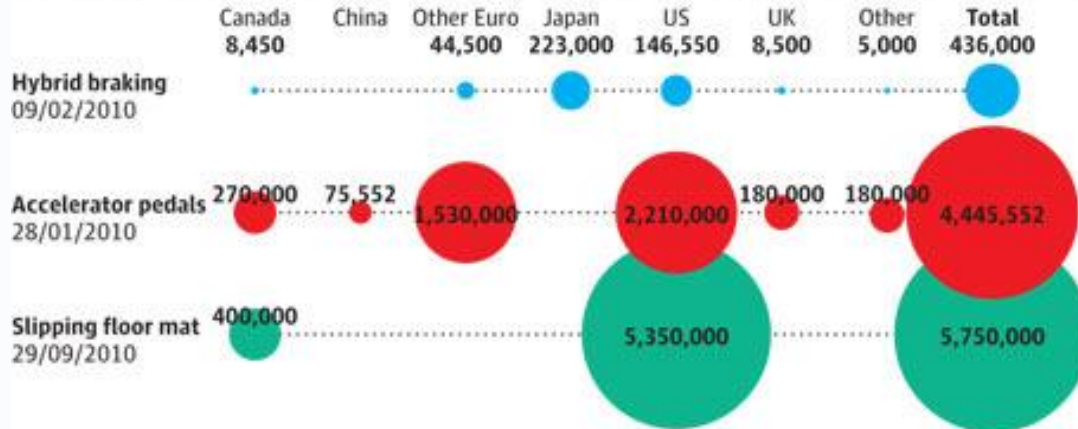
Categorisation of dimensions of cause and responsibility according to Bernard Weiner's attributive model

Case study

Toyota's worldwide recall 2010

Total recall

2.1 million vehicles are covered by both floormat and pedal recalls. Total cars: 8.54m



Toyota is recalling at least 311,000 third generation Prius hybrid cars after owners complained of inconsistent braking on rough or slick road surfaces



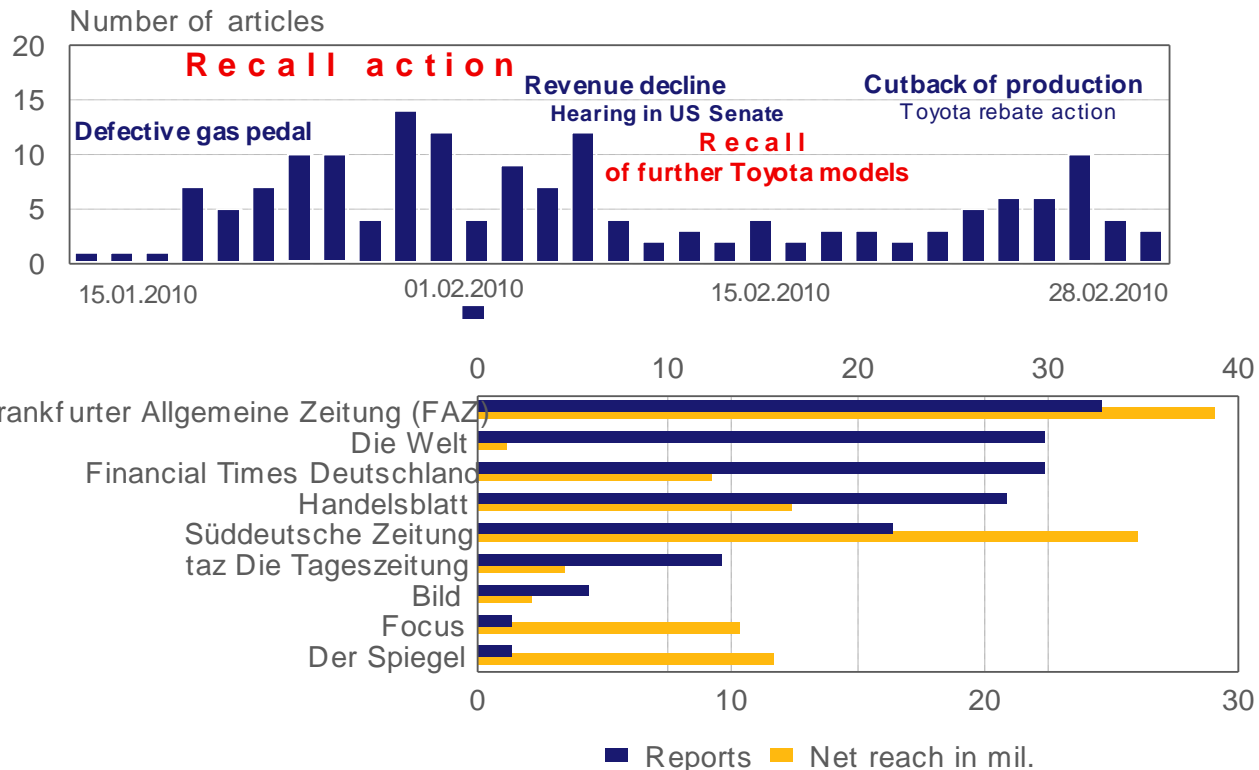
Point of departure

The question of guilt

- In January and February of 2010, when Toyota was forced to recall 5 million vehicles, the media saw the company as solely responsible. The theme was particularly emotionalised by virtue of nearly 50 fatal incidents in the USA – allegedly triggered by the defective and tardy braking system.
- An FAZ report from July 14, 2010: **Toyota drivers themselves apparently responsible for accidents:** “According to a report on the series of breakdowns for Toyota, it is possible that technical problems did not cause the series of accidents. According to the preliminary investigations of the American Department of Transportation, the drivers themselves bear more of the blame.”
- The goal of the media analysis is to identify the explanations of cause and responsibility regarding crisis events, and, from this, derive the potential damage to a company’s reputation.

Recall campaign gets attention

Intensity and chronological progression of the reportage



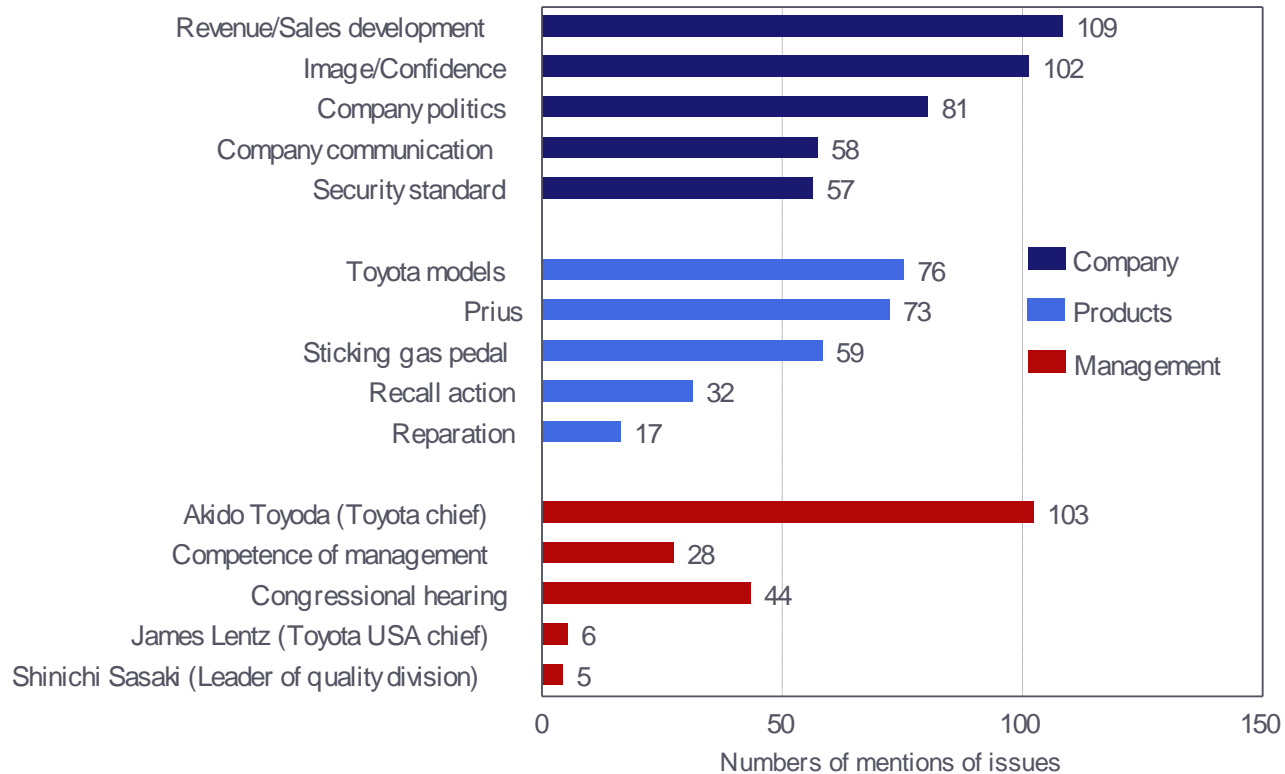
n = 166 articles

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January - February 2010 - Toyota Case Study

Loss of trust and decline in revenue

Presence of top issues according to theme

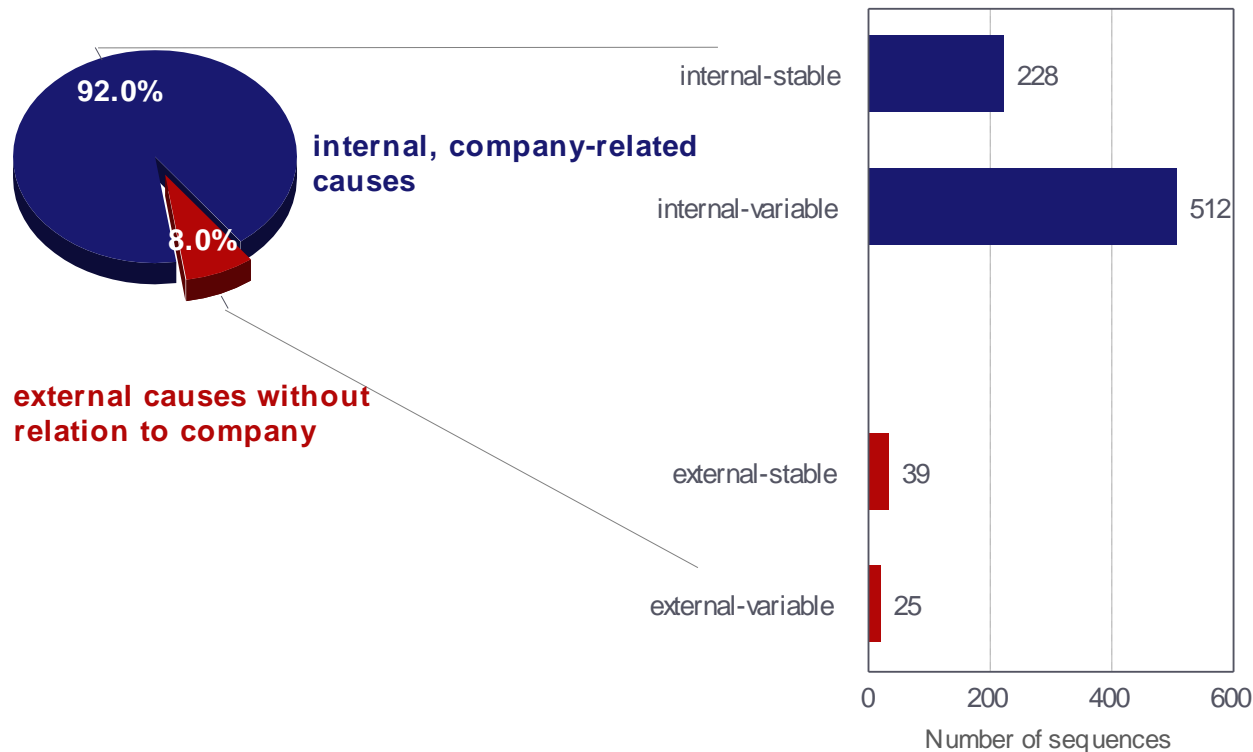


n = 850 mentions of top issues (top 5 per theme)
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Media: High corporate responsibility

Share of attributions according to dimension of cause



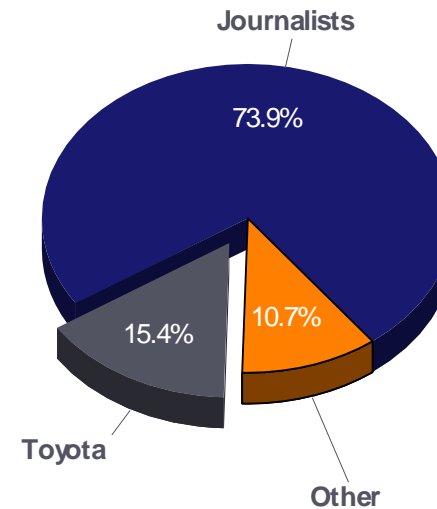
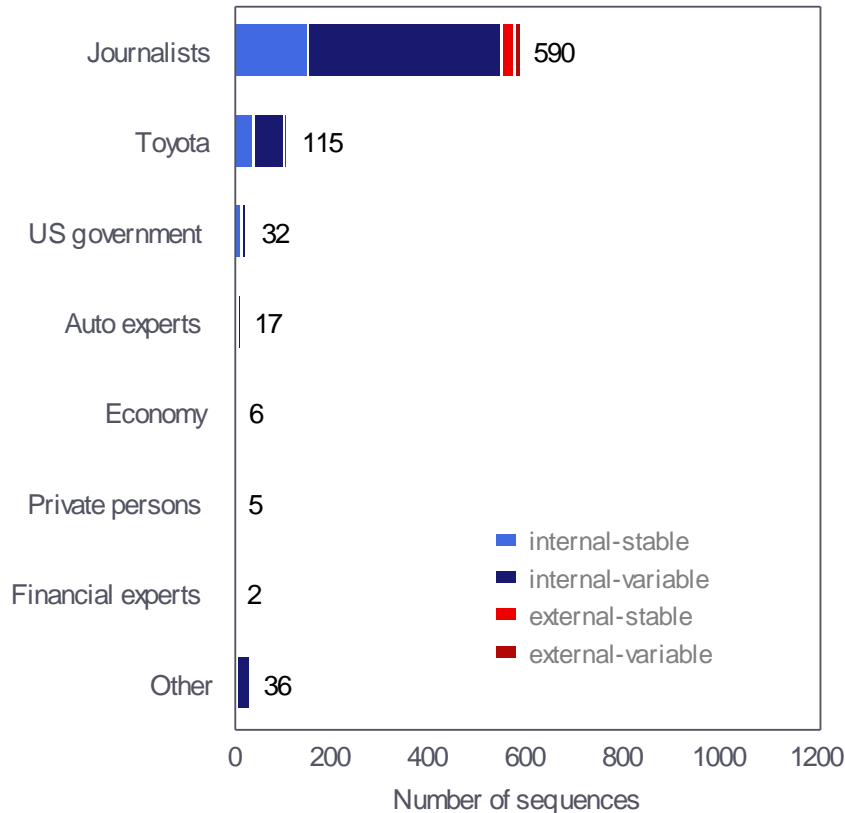
n = 804 sequences

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Journalists busy searching for the cause

Share of attributes per media actor



n= 1,382 sequences

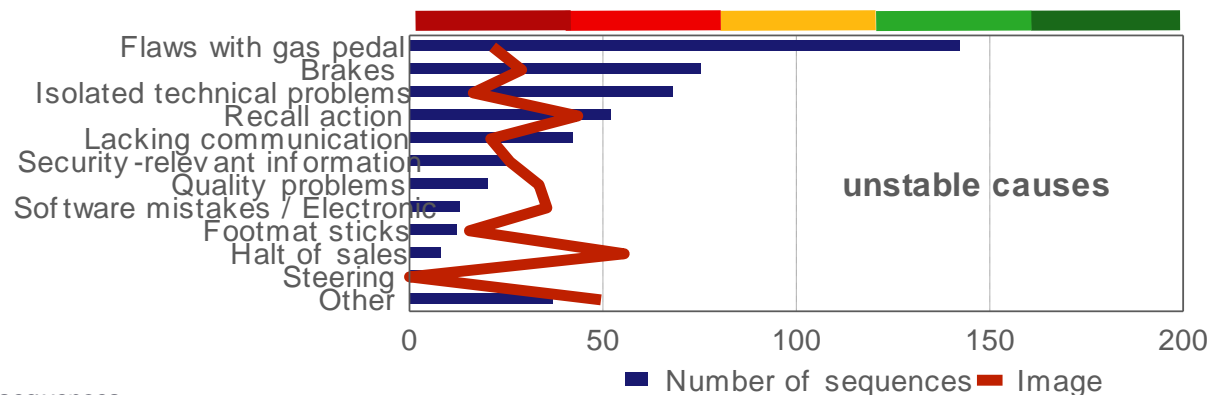
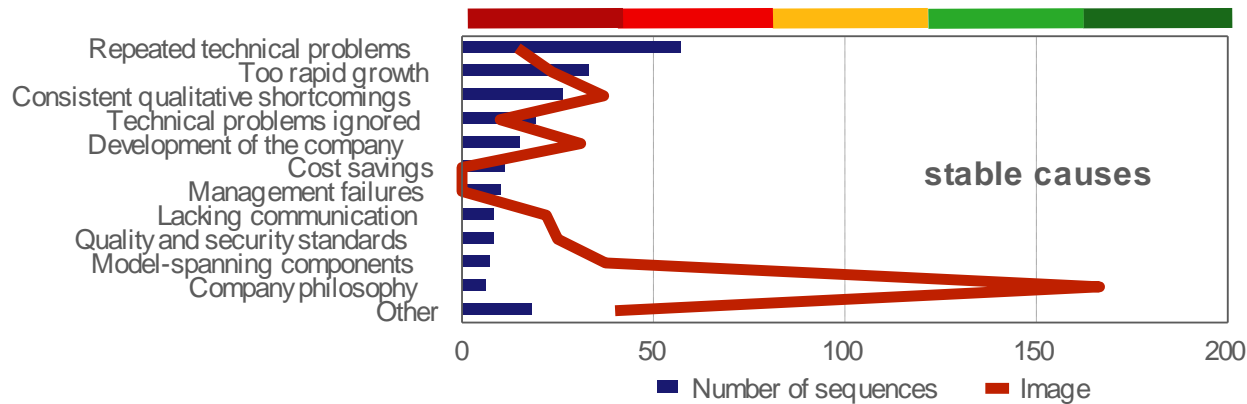
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Gas pedal as a top crisis factor

Presence / Value of attributions of cause and responsibility

Internal attributions of cause



n = 740 sequences

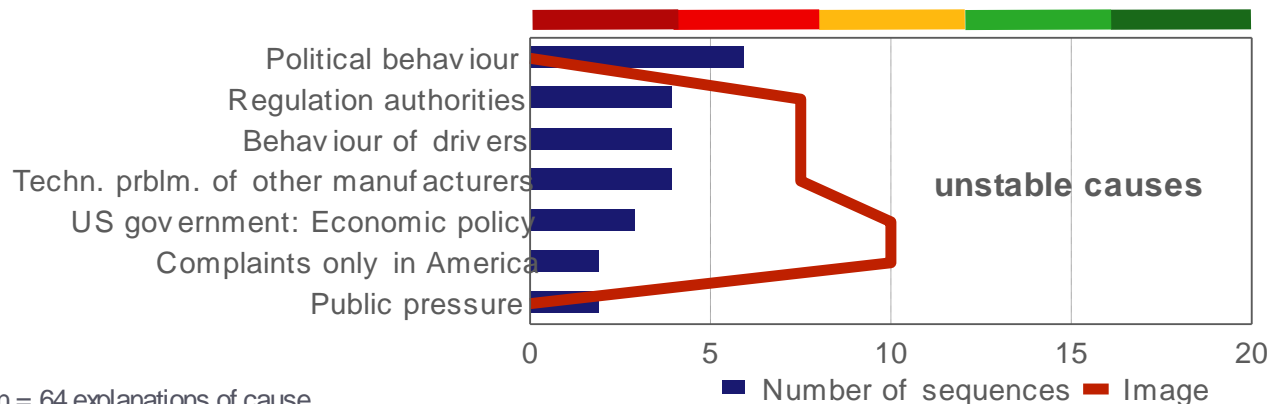
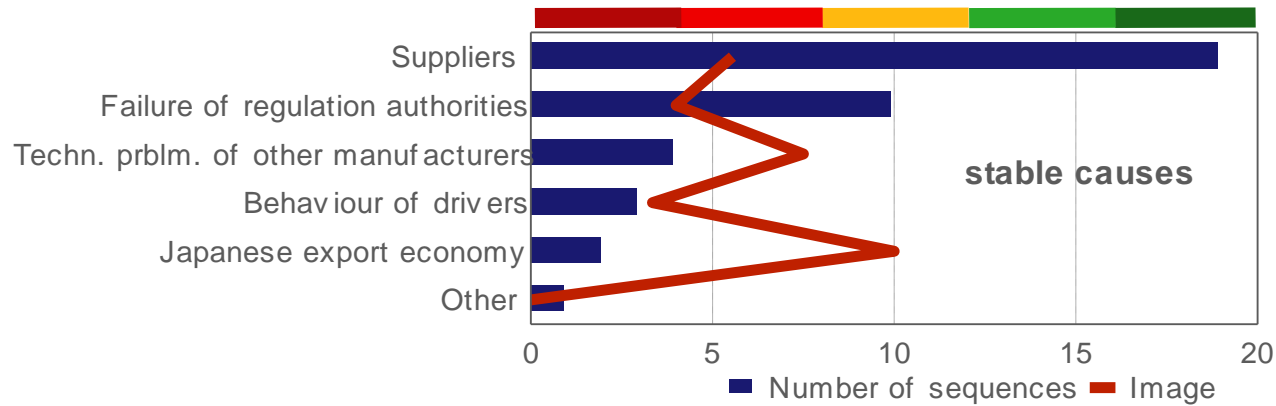
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Hardly any exonerating attributions

Presence / Value of attributions of cause and responsibility

External attributions of cause



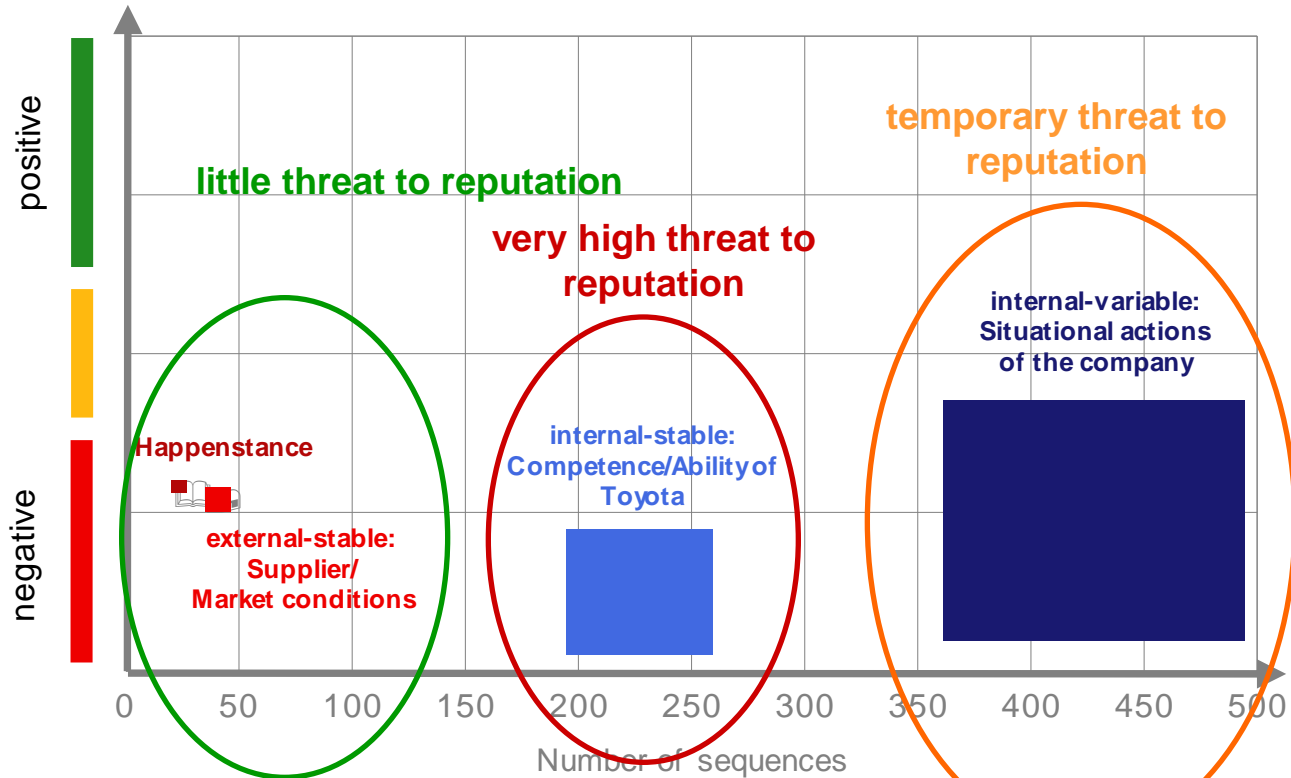
n = 64 explanations of cause

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Threat to reputation via stable attributions

Presence / Value of attributions of cause and responsibility



n = 804 sequences

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Crisis types in the process of attribution of organisations

Crisis type: Victim (unintentional)

- minimal attribution of responsibility
- minimal danger for an organisation

Crisis type: Accident (unintentional)

- moderate attribution of responsibility
- moderate danger for an organisation

Crisis type: Deliberate (intentional)

- high attribution of responsibility
- severe danger for an organisation

increasing
degree of
responsibility

External variable

External stable

increasing
danger for
the affected
organisation

Internal variable

Internal stable

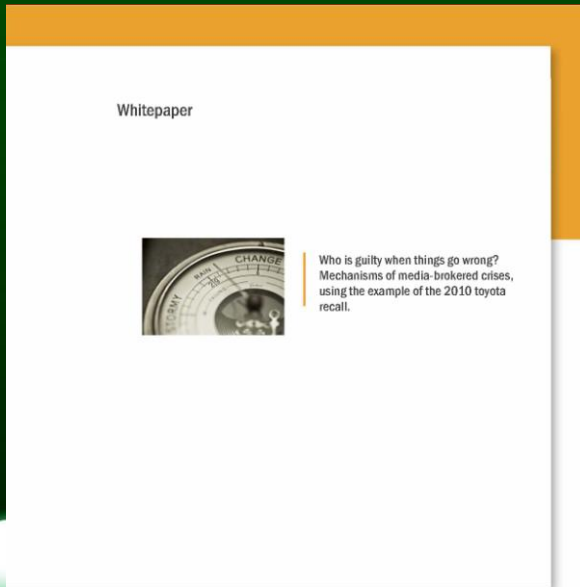
Pro-active crisis management

Tips for budget planning

- For an analysis of the form of the existing Case Study, a similar budget to what is used for the extensive Issue- and Reputation Analysis is used.
- Consider additional expenditure for the facilitation of the analysis and briefing of coders.
- In particular, operationalization for each analysis' special attribution dimension (attributions of cause and responsibility) will take additional time.
- Through practical coding via analysis on a sequence level, coding time is higher than with traditional/simpler Media Impact Analyses.

Thank you for your attention

Enjoy our Whitepaper



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